

The Myth of a "Land Without a People for a People Without a Land."

By Roger Garaudy

"There is no such thing as a Palestinian people... It is not as if we came and threw them out and took their country. They didn't exist."

Source: Mrs. Golda Meir. Statement to "The Sunday Times", 15 June, 1969.

Zionist ideology rests on a very simple postulate: It is written in Genesis (XV, 18 - 21):

"The Lord made an alliance with Abraham in these terms: It is to your descendants that I give this country, from the river of Egypt to the big river, the river Euphrates."

Starting from this, without asking themselves what the alliance consisted of, to whom the promise had been made or if the choice made was unconditional, the Zionist leaders, even the agnostics and atheists, proclaim: Palestine has been given to us by God.

The Israeli governments own statistics show that 15% of Israelis are religious. This doesn't stop 90% of them claiming that this land has been given to them by God... in whom they don't believe.

The great majority of Israelis today share neither religious practice nor faith and the different "religious parties" who, nevertheless, play a decisive role in the state of Israel, can only muster a tiny minority of citizens.

This apparent paradox is explained by Nathan Wienstock in his book: 'Zionism Against Israel' (Pub. Maspero, 1969, p.315)

"If the obscurantism of the rabbis triumphs in Israel, it is because Zionist mysticism only has coherence by reference to the religion of Moses. Take away the concepts of a "chosen people" and a "promised land" and the foundation of Zionism crumbles. This is why the religious parties paradoxically draw their strength from the complicity of agnostic Zionists. The internal coherence of the Zionist structure of Israel has imposed on its leaders the strengthening of the clergy's power. It was the social democrat "Mapai" party and not the religious parties which, on an impulse of Ben Gurion, made religious instruction an obligatory part of the school curriculum."

"This country exists as the fulfillment of a promise made by God Himself. It would be ridiculous to ask it to account for its legitimacy. This is the basic axiom formulated by Mrs. Golda Meir."

Source: "Le Monde", 15 October 1971

"This land has been promised to us and we have a right to it." restated Begin.

Source: Begin's statement at Oslo. "Davar" 12 December 1978.

"If one possesses the Bible, if one considers oneself to be the people of the Bible, one should also possess the biblical lands, those of the Judges and the Patriarchs, of Jerusalem and of Hebron, of Jericho and others besides."

Source: Moshe Dayan. "Jerusalem Post" 10 August 1967.

Very significantly, Ben Gurion evokes the American "precedent" where, in effect, for a century, the frontier remained mobile (as far as the Pacific, where the "closing of the frontier" was proclaimed in line with the success of the "Indian Hunt" to drive them away and grab their land).

Ben Gurion said very clearly:

"It's not a matter of maintaining the status quo. We have to create a dynamic state, orientated towards expansion."

Political practice corresponds to this remarkable theory: take the land and drive the inhabitants from it, as Moses and his successor Joshua did.

Menachem Begin, more deeply imbued with the biblical tradition than anyone, declared:

"Eretz Israel will be given back to the people of Israel. In its entirety and for ever."

Source: Menachem Begin: "The Revolt: Story of the Irgun", p. 335.

Thus the state of Israel places itself straight away above international law.

Imposed on the U.N. on the 11 May 1949 by the will of the United States, the State of Israel was only admitted on three conditions:

- 1 - Not to touch the status of Jerusalem;
- 2 - To allow Palestinian Arabs to come back to their homes;
- 3 - To respect the borders fixed by the partition decision.

Speaking about this U.N. resolution on "sharing", taken well before its admission, Ben Gurion declares:

"The State of Israel considers the U.N. resolution of 29 November 1947 to be null and void."

Source: "New York Times", 6 December 1953.

Echoing the theories already quoted of the American Albright, on the parallel between American and Zionist expansion, General Moshe Dayan wrote:

"Take the American declaration of Independence. It contains no mention of territorial limits. We are not obliged to fix the limits of the State."

Source: "Jerusalem Post" 10 August 1967

Policy corresponds precisely to this law of the jungle: the "partition" of Palestine, in line with the U.N. resolution was never respected.

Already, the resolution on the partition of Palestine, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations (at the time composed of a massive majority of western states) on the 29 November 1947, indicated the designs of the West on their "forward stronghold": On this date the Jews constituted 32% of the population and possessed 5.6% of the land: they would receive 56% of the territory, including the most fertile land. These decisions had been secured under U.S. pressure.

President Truman put the State Department under unprecedented pressure. Under-Secretary of State S. Welles wrote:

"By direct order of the White House American civil servants had to use direct or indirect pressure... To ensure the necessary majority in the final vote."

Source: S. Welles, "We need not fail" Boston, 1948, p.63

The Minister of Defense of the time, James Forrestal, confirms:

"The methods used to pressure and to constrain the other nations within the U.N. were close to scandalous."

Source: "Forrestal's Memoirs", N.Y., The Viking Press. 1951, p.363

The power of the private monopolies was mobilized: Drew Pearson, in the Chicago Daily of 9 February 1948, gives details, for example:

"Harvey Firestone, a rubber plantation owner in Liberia, used his influence with the Liberian government."

From 1948 even these partial decisions were violated.

As the Arabs protested against and refused to accept such an injustice, the Israeli leaders took advantage and grabbed new territory, notably Jaffa and Acre, so that by 1949 the Zionists controlled 80% of the country and 770,000 Palestinians had been driven out.

The method used was that of terror.

The most glaring example was that of Deir Yassin: On April 9, 1948, the 254 inhabitants of this village (men, women, children, old men) were massacred by "Irgun" troops (whose leader was Menachim Begin), by the same method as the Nazis' at Oradour.

In his book "The Revolt: The History of Irgun", Begin wrote that there would not have been a State of Israel without the "victory" of Deir Yassin (p. 162 of the English edition). He added:

"The Haganah carried out victorious attacks on other fronts... In a state of terror, the Arabs fled, crying, 'Deir Yassin'." (Idem p. 162 ; French edition p.200)

Any Palestinian who had left his home before 1 August 1948 was considered as

"absent".

In this way two thirds of Arab land (70,000 ha out of 110,000) was confiscated. When a law was passed in 1953 on property ownership, compensation was fixed on the value of the land in 1950, but in the meantime the Israeli Pound had dropped to a fifth of its 1950 value.

Besides, since the beginning of Jewish immigration, and here again in the most classical colonial way, land had been bought from feudal, non-resident landowners (the "effendi") so that were driven from the land which the poor peasants, the fellah, they cultivated by these arrangements between their former masters and the new arrivals without their involvement. Deprived of their land, all they could do was to flee.

The U.N. had appointed a mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte. In his first report, Count Bernadotte wrote:

"It would offend basic principles to prevent these innocent victims of the conflict from returning to their homes, while Jewish immigrants flood into Palestine and, what's more, threatening to permanently replace the dispossessed Arab refugees who have been here for centuries."

He described, *"Zionist pillage on a grand scale and the destruction of villages without apparent military need."*

This report (U.N. Document A. 648, p.14) was filed on the 16 September 1948. On the 17 September 1948 Count Bernadotte and his French assistant, Colonel Serot, were assassinated in the part of Jerusalem occupied by the Zionists.

Source: For the assassination of Count Bernadotte see General A. Lundstrom's report (who was sitting in Bernadotte's car) which was sent to the U.N. the same day as the attack (17 September 1948). See also the book published by the same general for the 20th anniversary of the crime: L'assassinat du Comte Bernadotte, printed in Rome (pub. East. A. Fanelli) in 1970 under the title: 'Un tributo a la memoria del Comte Folke Bernadotte'. Ralph Hewins' book: 'Count Bernadotte, his life and work' (Hutchinson, 1948). And in the Milanese weekly Europa', Baruch Nadel's confessions (quoted in Le Monde, 4 and 5 July 1971).

It was not the first Zionist crime against someone who criticized their deception.

Lord Moyne, the British Secretary of State in Cairo, declared on 9 June 1942 in the House of Lords that the Jews were not the descendants of the ancient Hebrews and that they had no "legitimate claim" on the Holy Land. In favor of limiting immigration into Palestine, he was accused of being *"an implacable enemy of Hebrew independence."*

Source: Isaac Zaar: "Rescue and Liberation: America's part in the birth of Israel", N.Y. Bloc Publishing Cy, 1954, p115

On 6 November 1944 Lord Moyne was shot dead in Cairo by two members of the Stern Gang (Yitzhak Shamir's group). Years later, on 2 July 1975, "The Evening Star" of Auckland revealed that the bodies of the two executed assassins had been exchanged for 20 Arab prisoners to be buried at the "Heros Monument" in Jerusalem. The British

government deplored that Israel should honor assassins as heroes.

On the 22 July 1946 the wing of the King David Hotel where the British military had set up their headquarters was blown up killing about 100 people - Englishmen, Arabs and Jews. It was Irgun, Menachem Begin's group, who claimed responsibility.

The State of Israel replaced the former colonialists and used the same procedures. For example, agricultural aid for irrigation was distributed in a discriminatory way, such that Jewish farmers were systematically favored. Between 1948 and 1969 the area of irrigated land rose, for the Jewish sector, from 20,000 to 164,000 ha and, for the Arab sector, from 800 to 4,100 ha. The colonial system was thus perpetuated and even aggravated: Doctor Rosenfeld, in his book, "Arab Migrant Workers", published by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1970, recognizes that Arab agriculture was more prosperous during the British mandate than today.

Segregation is also a feature of housing policy. The president of the Israeli Human Rights League, Doctor Israel Shahak, a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in his book, "The Racism of the State of Israel" (p.57) tells us that there are in Israel whole towns (Carmel, Nazareth, Illith, Hatzor, Arad, Mitzphen-Ramen, and others) where non-Jews are forbidden by law to live.

In cultural matters the same colonialist spirit reigns.

"In 1970, the Ministry of National Education proposed two different versions to high school pupils of the prayer to 'Yiskar': one version declared that the death camps had been built by 'the diabolical Nazi government and the German nation of murderers.'"

"The second version evoked, more globally, '...the German nation of murderers' and both contain a paragraph calling on God 'to avenge before our eyes the blood of the victims.'"

Source: "Ce sont mes frères que je cherche", Ministry of Education and Culture. Jerusalem, 1990.

This culture of racial hatred has borne fruit:

"Following Kahana, an ever-growing number of soldiers steeped in the history of the Genocide imagined all sorts of scenarios to exterminate the Arabs", declared Ehud Praver, an officer in charge of the Army teaching body. "It is very worrying that the genocide can thus legitimize a Jewish racism. We must henceforth know that it is not only vital to deal with the question of the Genocide, but also with that of the rise of Fascism, to explain its nature and dangers for democracy." According to Praver, "Too many soldiers have started to believe that the Genocide can justify any dishonourable action."

Source: Tom Segev. op. cit. p. 473.

The problem was posed very clearly even before the existence of the State of Israel. The Director of the "National Jewish Fund", Yossef Weitz, was writing already in 1940: *"It should be clear for us that there is not room for two peoples in this country. If the Arabs leave it, there will be enough for us (...) There is nothing else to do but to remove them all; we mustn't leave a single village, a single tribe... We must explain to Roosevelt*

and all the heads of friendly states that the land of Israel isn't too small if all the Arabs leave and if the borders are pushed back a little to the north, as far as the Litani, and to the east, on the Golan Heights."

Source: Yossef Weitz, "Journal" Tel Aviv, 1965

In the important Israeli newspaper "Yediot Aahronot", of 14 July 1972, Yoram Bar Porath reminded us forcefully of the objective to be reached:

"It is the duty of Israeli leaders to explain to public opinion, clearly and courageously, a certain number of facts that are forgotten with time. The first of these is that there is no Zionism, colonialization or Jewish State without the eviction of the Arabs and the expropriation of their land."

Here we are, once again, in the most rigorous logic of the Zionist system : How do you create a Jewish majority in a country populated by a native Palestinian Arab community?

Political Zionism provided the only solution in its colonialist program : Realize a colony of settlements by driving off the Palestinians and encouraging Jewish immigration.

Driving off the Palestinians and grabbing their land was a deliberate and systematic undertaking.

At the time of the Balfour Declaration the Zionists owned only 2.5% of the land and at the time of the decision to "share" Palestine, 6.5%. In 1982 they possessed 93%.

The methods used to dispossess the native of his land are those of the most implacable colonialism, with an even more marked racist coloring in the case of Zionism.

The first stage had the characteristics of a classic colonialism: exploiting the local work force. This was the method of Baron Edouard de Rothschild : Just as he had exploited, on his vineyards in Algeria, the cheap labor of the fellahs, he had simply enlarged his sphere of activity in Palestine, exploiting on his vineyards different Arabs to the Algerians.

A historical twist happened around 1905 with the arrival from Russia of a new wave of immigrants following the crushing of the 1905 revolution. Instead of carrying on with the fight on the spot, beside the other Russian revolutionaries, the deserters of the crushed revolution imported a strange "Zionist socialism" into Palestine: They created artisan cooperatives and peasant "**Kibbutz**", excluding the Palestinian Fellahs to create an economy relying on a Jewish working and agricultural class.

From classical colonialism (of the English or French type), one thus moved to a colony of settlement, in the logic of political Zionism, implying a flow of immigrants "in favor" of whom and "against" nobody (as Professor Klein said) land and work had to be reserved.

From this point it comes down to replacing the Palestinian people with another one and, naturally, grabbing the land.

The starting point of the great operation was the creation, in 1901, of the "National Jewish Fund", which shows the following original characteristic, even compared to other colonialisms: the land acquired by it cannot be resold or even rented to non-Jews.

Two other laws concern the Keren Kayemet ("**National Jewish Fund**". Law passed on 23 November 1953) and the Keren Hayesod ("**Reconstruction Fund**". Law passed on 10 January 1956).

"These two laws," wrote Professor Klein, "permitted the transformation of these societies, which find themselves benefitting from a certain number of privileges."

Without enumerating these privileges, he introduces, as a simple "observation", the fact that lands possessed by the "National Jewish Fund" are declared "Land of Israel", and a fundamental law was passed to proclaim the inalienability of these lands. It is one of the four "fundamental laws" (elements of a future constitution, which still doesn't exist, 50 years after the creation of Israel), passed in 1960. It is deplorable that the learned lawyer, normally attentive to detail, makes no comment on this "inalienability". He does not even define it: a piece of land "saved" by the Jewish National fund (redemption of the land), is a piece of land which has become "Jewish"; it can never be sold to a "non-Jew", nor rented to a "non-Jew", nor worked by a "non-Jew".

Can one deny the racial discrimination of this fundamental law?

The agrarian policy of the Israeli leaders is one of systematic despoilment of the Arab peasantry.

The property law of 1943 on expropriation in the public interest is a relic of the British mandate period. This law loses its direction when it is applied in a discriminatory way, for example, when, in 1962, 500 ha were expropriated at Deir El-Arad, Nabel and Be'neh, the "public interest" consisted of creating the town of Carmel, which was reserved exclusively for Jews.

Another procedure: the use of the "emergency laws", passed in 1945 by the British against the Jews and Arabs. Law 124 gives the Military Governor the right, this time under the pretext of "security", to suspend all citizens' rights, including free movement: The army only has to declare a zone forbidden *"for security reasons"* and an Arab no longer has the right to go onto his land without the authorization of the Military Governor. If this authorization is refused, the land is then declared "uncultivated" and the Ministry of Agriculture can *"take possession of uncultivated land in order to ensure its cultivation."*

When the British passed this fiercely colonialist legislation in 1945 to fight Jewish terrorism, the lawyer Bernard (DOV) Joseph, protesting against this system of "lettre de cachet", declared:

"Are we all to be subjected to official terror?... No citizen can be safe from life imprisonment without a trial... the power of the administration to exile anyone is unlimited... it is not necessary to have committed any crime, a decision taken in some office is enough..."

The same Bernard (DOV) Joseph, once Israeli Minister of Justice, would apply these

laws against Arabs.

J. Shapira, speaking about the same laws, at the same protest meeting of 7 February 1946 at Tel Aviv (Hapraklit, February 1946, p. 58 - 64), declared in even stronger terms:

"The order established by this legislation is unprecedented in civilized countries. Even in Nazi Germany there were no such laws."

The same J. Shapira, once Public Prosecutor of the State of Israel, was to apply these laws against the Arabs. To justify the keeping of these laws of terror, "the state of emergency" has not been lifted since 1948 in the State of Israel.

Shimon Peres wrote in the newspaper "Davar" of 25 January 1972 :

"The use of law 125, on which military government is founded, follows directly on from the struggle for Jewish implantation and immigration."

The law of 1948 (amended in 1949) on the cultivation of fallow land goes in the same direction but more directly: Without even seeking the pretext of "public utility" or "military security", the Minister of Agriculture can requisition any abandoned land. The massive exodus of terrorized Arabs, as in the case of Deir Yassin in 1948, Kafr Kassem on 29 October 1956, or the "pogroms" of "unit 101" (created by Moshe Dayan and commanded for a long time by Ariel Sharon) thus "liberated" vast areas, cleared of their Arab owners or workers and given to the Jewish occupiers.

The mechanism for the dispossession of the fellahs is completed by the law of 30 June 1948, the emergency decree of 15 November 1948 on the property of those "absent", the law relating to the lands of the "absent" (14 March 1950), the law on the acquisition of land (13 March 1953), and a whole arsenal of measures to legalize theft by forcing the Arabs to leave their land and installing Jewish colonies, as Nathan Wienstock illustrates in his book: "Zionism Against Israel".

To wipe out even the memory of the existence of the Palestinian agricultural population and to give truth to the myth of the "deserted country", the Arab villages were destroyed - their houses, walls and even their graveyards and tombs. In 1975 Professor Israel Shahak gave, district by district, a list of 385 Arab villages destroyed by bulldozer, out of 475 existent in 1948.

"To convince us that before Israel, Palestine was a desert, hundreds of villages were razed by bulldozer - their houses, walls, graveyards and their tombs."

Source: Israel Shahak, "Racism and the State of Israel", from p. 152.

The overall result is as follows: A million and a half Palestinians having been driven off the land, "Jewish land", (as the people of the "National Jewish Fund" call it), 6.5% in 1947, today represents more than 93% of Palestine (75% to the State and 14% to the National Fund.)

It is noteworthy (and significant) that the consequences of this operation were

summarized at an early stage in the newspaper of the Afrikaners of South Africa, "Die Transvaler", an expert in matters of racial discrimination (apartheid):

"What is the difference between the way in which the Jewish people struggles to remain what it is in the midst of a non-Jewish population, and the way the Afrikaners try to stay what they are?"

Source: Henry Katzew, "South Africa: a Country Without Friends", quoted by R. Stevens (Zionism, South Africa and Apartheid).

The same system of "apartheid" manifests itself in the status of the individual as it does in the appropriation of land. The "autonomy" which the Israelis want to grant the Palestinians is the equivalent of the "homelands" for the blacks in South Africa.

Analyzing the consequences of the law of "return", Klein asks the question:

"If the Jewish people are easily the most numerous in the State of Israel, by the same token, one can still say that the entire population of the State of Israel is not Jewish, as the country has a sizeable non-Jewish minority, mainly Arab and Druze. The question which must be asked is to what extent the existence of a Law of Return which favors the immigration of one part of the population (defined by its religious and ethnic adherence), cannot be regarded as discriminatory."

Source: Claude Klein, Director of the Institute of Comparative Law of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. "The Jewish Character of the State of Israel", Ed. Cujas, Paris 1977, p. 33.

The author wonders in particular if the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (adopted on 21 December 1965 by the General Assembly of the United Nations) doesn't apply to the Law of Return.

By a dialectic which we shall let the reader be the judge of, the eminent lawyer concludes with this subtle distinction:

In matters of non-discrimination "a measure must not be directed against one particular group. The Law of Return is in favor of Jews who want to settle in Israel, it is not directed against any group or nationality. One cannot see in what respect this law would be discriminatory."

Source: op.cit. Klein p. 35

To the reader who might risk being led astray by this, at the very least audacious, logic, according to a famous sally, that all citizens are equal but that some are more equal than others - let's give a concrete illustration of the situation created by this Law of Return. The Law of Nationality (5712 - 1952).

It concerns (article 3) *"any individual who, immediately before the foundation of the state, was a Palestinian subject and who didn't become Israeli by virtue of article 2"* (which concerns the Jews). Those referred to by this circumlocution (and who are considered as *"having never had any nationality previously"*, in other words stateless people by inheritance) must prove that they were living on this land over a given period

(documentary proof often being impossible to find because the papers disappeared during the war and the terror that accompanied the establishment of the Zionist state). Failing this, to become a citizen, the "naturalization" route demanded, for example, *"a certain knowledge of the Hebrew language."* After which, *"if he judges it useful"* the Minister of the Interior grants (or refuses) Israeli nationality.

In short, by virtue of Israeli law a Jew from Patagonia becomes an Israeli citizen the very moment he sets foot on Tel Aviv airport; a Palestinian, born in Palestine, of Palestinian parents can be considered as stateless. Here there is no racial discrimination against the Palestinians, simply a measure in favor of the Jews!

It therefore seems difficult to contest the U.N. General Assembly's resolution of 10 November 1975 (Resolution 3379 xxx) defining zionism as *"a form of racism and racial discrimination."*

In actual fact, only a tiny minority of those who settle in Israel have come to realize "the promise". The "Law of return" has had very little effect. This is fortunate because in every country of the world Jews have played an eminent role in every area of culture, science and the arts and it would be distressing for zionism to reach the objective which the anti-semites set themselves: to tear the Jews from their respective homelands and to enclose them in a world ghetto.

The example of the French Jews is significant; after the Evian agreements of 1962 and the liberation of Algeria, out of 130,000 Jews who left Algeria, only 20,000 went to Israel and 110,000 to France. This movement was not the result of anti-semitic persecution as the proportion of non-Jewish, French settlers who left Algeria was the same. The reason for this departure was not anti-Semitism but the prior French colonialism and the French Jews of Algeria met the same fate as the other French people in Algeria.

To sum up: Almost all Jewish immigrants to Israel came to escape anti-semitic persecution.

In 1880 there were 25,000 Jews in Palestine for a population of 500,000.

In 1882 the large-scale immigration started following the great pogroms of czarist Russia.

Thus 50,000 Jews arrived in Palestine between 1882 and 1917.

Then, between the two wars, came emigrants from Poland and the Maghreb to escape persecution.

But the greatest number comes from Germany as a result of the vile anti semitism of Hitler; almost 400,000 Jews thus arrived in Palestine before 1945.

In 1947 on the eve of the creation of the State of Israel, there were 600,000 Jews in Palestine out of a total population of 1,250,000.

And so the systematic uprooting of the Palestinians began.

Before the war of 1948 about 650,000 Arabs lived in the territory which was to become the State of Israel. In 1949 there were 160,000 of them left. Because of a high birth rate their descendants numbered 450,000 at the end of 1970. The Human Rights League of Israel reveals that between June 1967 and 15 November 1969 more than 20,000 Arab houses were dynamited in Israel and the West Bank.

There were, at the time of the British census of 31 December 1922, 757,000 inhabitants in Palestine of which 663,000 were Arab (590,000 Muslim Arabs and 73,000 Christian Arabs) and 83,000 Jews (that is: 88% Arabs and 11% Jews). It should be remembered that this so-called "desert" was a cereal and citrus fruit exporter.

As early as 1891 one of the first Zionists, Asher Guinsberg (writing under the pseudonym Ahad Ha'am) "one of the people" visiting Palestine, gives this eye-witness account:

"Abroad, we are used to believing that Eretz-Israel is today semi-desert, desert without cultivation. and that whoever wants to acquire land can come here and get as much as his heart desires. But the truth is nothing like this. In any part of the country, it is difficult to find uncultivated fields. The only uncultivated places are expanses of sand and stony mountains where only fruit trees can grow, and even then, only after a lot of heavy preparatory labor."

Source: Ahad Ha'arn. Complete Works (In Hebrew). Tel Aviv. Devir Publ. House and Jerusalem. The Hebrew Publishing House, 8th edition, p. 23. (Tel Aviv)

In reality, before the Zionists, the "bedouins" (in fact cereal growers) were exporting 30,000 tons of wheat per year; the area of Arab orchards tripled between 1921 and 1942, that of orange groves and other citrus fruit grew seven-fold between 1922 and 1947, production grew ten-fold between 1922 and 1938.

If we just take the example of citrus fruit, The Peel Report, submitted to the British Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in July 1937, based on the rapid growth of orange groves in Palestine, estimated that for the 30 million crates of winter oranges by which the world consumption would rise in the following decade, the producing and exporting countries would be as follows:

Palestine: 15 million

United States: 7 million

Spain: 5 million

Other countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Algeria, etc.): 3 million

Source: "Peel Report", chapter 8, ° 19, p. 214

According to a State Department study, submitted on 20 March to a Congress commission:

"More than 200,000 Israelis are now settled in the Occupied Territories (including Golan and East Jerusalem). They amount to 'approximately' 13% of the total population

of these territories.

About 90,000 of them live in the 150 settlements of the West Bank, *"where the Israeli authorities have about half of the territory."*

"In East-Jerusalem and in the Arab suburbs attached to the municipality," continues the State Department, "almost 120,000 Israelis are settled in about twelve districts. In the Gaza Strip, where the Hebrew State confiscated 30% of an already overpopulated territory, 3,000 Israelis live in about 15 settlements. On the Golan plateau, there are 12,000 spread over about 30 localities."

Source: "Le Monde", 18 April 1993

The daily "Yedioth Aharonoth", the biggest circulation paper in Israel, wrote:

"Since the 70's, there has never been such an acceleration in construction in the territories. Ariel Sharon (Minister for Housing and Construction), is feverishly busy establishing new settlements, developing those already existant, building roads and preparing new building sites."

Source: These Israeli texts are reproduced in "Le Monde", of 8 April 1993

(Let's not forget that Ariel Sharon was the general who commanded the invasion of Lebanon. He armed the Phalangist militias who carried out the "pogroms" in the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Chatilla. Sharon turned a blind eye to these exactions and was an accomplice, as was revealed, even by the Israeli commission appointed to investigate the massacres.)

The maintenance of these Jewish colonies in the occupied territories and their protection by the Israeli army and the arming of the settlers (like the adventurers of the American Wild-West in the past) makes any real Palestinian "autonomy" impossible and makes peace impossible as long as the occupation continues to be a reality.

The main thrust of colonial settlement is directed at Jerusalem with the declared goal of making irreversible the decision to annex Jerusalem in its entirety, a decision which was, nevertheless, unanimously condemned by the United Nations (including by the United States !)

The colonial settlements in the Occupied Territories are a blatant violation of international law and specifically of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, article 49 of which stipulates:

"The occupying power cannot proceed with a transfer of one part of its own civil population into the territory occupied by it."

Even Hitler did not infringe this international law: He did not install German civilian "settlers" on land from which French peasants had been evicted.

The pretext of "security", like the one of the "terrorism" of the "Intifada", is laughable. The statistics on this subject are telling:

"1,116 Palestinians have been killed since the beginning of the Intifada (the stone-throwing revolt) on 9 December 1987, shot by soldiers, policemen or settlers. The figures break down as follows: 626 deaths in 1988 and 1989, 134 in 1990, 93 in 1991, 108 in 1992 and 155 from 1 January to 11 September 1993. Among the victims were 233 children under 17 years old according to a study carried out by Betsalem, the Israeli association for human rights.

"Military sources give a figure of nearly 20,000 for the number of Palestinians wounded by bullets and the U.N. Relief and Works agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) gives a figure of 90,000.

"33 israelis soldiers have been killed since 9 December 1987: 4 in 1988, 4 in 1989. 1 in 1990 2 in 1991, 11 in 1992 and 11 in 1993.

"40 civilians, mostly settlers, have been killed in the occupied territories according to the army's reckoning.

"According to the humanitarian organizations, in 1993, 15,000 Palestinians were being held in prisons of the penal administration and in army detention centres.

"12 Palestinians have died in Israeli prisons since the beginning of the Intifada, some of them under circumstances which have yet to be illuminated, Betsalem assures us. This humanitarian organization also indicates that at least 20,000 detainees are tortured every year during interrogation in the military detention centres."

Source: "Le Monde" of 12 September 1993 p. 118

There have been many violations of international law, considered as a "scrap of paper" and, what is more, as Professor Israel Shahak wrote:

"These colonies, by their very nature, subscribe to a system of despoilment, discrimination, and apartheid."

Source: Israel Shahak: "Racism and the State of Israel", p.263

Here is Professor Israel Shahak's testimony on the idolatry which consists of replacing the God of Israel by the State of Israel.

I am Jew who lives in Israel. I consider myself as a law-abiding citizen. I do my time in the army every year even though I am more than 40 years old. But I am not "devoted" to the State of Israel or any other state or organization! I am attached to my ideals. I believe that one must say the truth and do whatever is necessary to save justice and equality for all. I am attached to Hebrew poetry and language and I like to think that I modestly respect some of the values of our ancient prophets.

But to devote a cult to the State? I can well imagine Amos or Isaiah if they had been asked to "devote" a cult to the kingdom of Israel or Judea!

Jews believe and say three times a day that a Jew must be devoted to God and to God alone:

"You will love Yaveh, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." (Deuteronomy, ch.VI, verse 5).

A small minority still believe in this. But it seems to me that the majority of the people have lost their God and replaced it by an idol just like when they adored the golden calf in the desert so much that they gave all their gold to make a statue to him. The name of their modern idol is the State of Israel.

Source: Ibidem, p. 93

http://www.radioislam.org/historia/zionism/land_wo_ppl.html

The Birth of Israel: The Way It Really Was

By Stephen S. Rosenfeld

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Israel's 50th anniversary as a state could easily have been a grand jubilee observance of peace with the Palestinians. I say this thinking it could still happen. Certainly it has to count that Israelis curious about their history are now finally getting exposed to a deeper and more inclusive version of it.

Israel's practitioners of a "new history" have been looking beyond the stirring narratives of rescue and national redemption to see how the founding appeared to the Palestinians. In a notable recent series on the state-run Israel TV, the birth of Israel was presented as having not just valiant champions but coldly calculating ones. Israelis were shown as contributors to the "transfer" -- the uprooting and expelling -- of hundreds of thousands of long-settled Palestinians. The resulting buzz has fed into current Israeli concern over the stalemate in peace talks.

Everywhere, state-making turns out to be a violent sorting out of winners and losers. This newly appreciated slice of its history does not invalidate Israel's claim to statehood, which rests on unassailable historical and religious tradition and on the absolute post-Holocaust urgency of the Zionist movement for a Jewish national home. But it does clarify the picture of Palestine that, for the sake of truth, ought to be in people's minds. It is part of the unsentimental reality that peace must somehow accommodate.

It is good news that some number of Israelis -- and not just intellectuals but a broader public -- should now be acknowledging the true manner of Israel's birth as it affected others. An American commentator, Rochelle Furstenberg, observes that the "post-Zionist" historians figure Israel is now strong enough to confront earlier myths. The fact is that pre-state Zionist militia commanders, the young Yitzhak Rabin among them, drove Palestinians from hundreds of their villages, including Deir Yassin, scene of a notorious massacre. What Israelis hail as their finest national hour, Palestinians term "the catastrophe."

President Clinton recently waded into these waters blithely unaware. In a CBS special celebrating the Israeli anniversary, he tossed in a boilerplate tribute to Israel's "making a once-barren desert bloom." He was promptly (but not on air) caught up by Hala Maksoud, president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee: "Palestine was not a desert. Palestinians had a rich culture and society. Haifa, Jaffa and Acre were thriving cities. But Israel erased the Palestinian presence from the land, destroying 418 Palestinian villages. Israel was built on the wreckage of Palestinian lives. It is unconscionable for President Clinton to celebrate this history, while ignoring its human cost. . . .

"Even within Israel the public discussions of the anniversary have been much more thoughtful and frank in reexamining the Palestinian experience.

"Mr. Clinton's statement was particularly astonishing, coming at a time when the U.S. is trying to act as an honest broker in the peace process."

For Israelis, the 50-year balance sheet includes great pluses: the establishment and defense of the state, provision of refuge for Jews in desperate straits, preservation of democracy, building a modern society and economy and beginning peace with some of the neighbors. All that is on one side of the ledger. On the other is Israel's failure to do the hard things that should have been done to invite reconciliation with Palestinians.

The Palestinians' balance sheet is starker. They judge it a success just that they have asserted and maintained a national identity in the minds of their people and in world consciousness. But there has been a specific failure to exploit the several opportunities (1948, 1978) to work toward self-determination, and a general failure to match the Zionists in applying self-discipline to the pursuit of a deeply felt destiny.

The Israeli-Palestinian transaction is a century old and far from complete. But it is evident what its eventual political bottom line must be: the establishment of a Palestinian state next to the existing Jewish state. The nations of the world had it right when they voted to partition then-British Palestine in 1947. It was a good idea then, even though, while the Israelis accepted it, the Palestinians turned it down. Now the two parties have reversed positions, with the Palestinians in favor and the Israeli government of Binyamin Netanyahu seemingly locked in denial, but the idea remains compelling and sound.

http://www.radioislam.org/historia/zionism/birth_of_isrl.html

Israel's Birth Myths

By **Simha Flapan**, from the introduction to his book *The Birth of Israel, Myths and Realities* 1987.

For each of these myths Flapan dedicates a chapter in his book, describing what really happened.

Myth One: Zionist acceptance of the UN Partition Resolution of November, 29 1947, was a far-reaching compromise by which the Jewish community abandoned the concept of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine and recognized the rights of the Palestinians to their own state. Israel accepted this sacrifice because it anticipated the implementation of the resolution in peace and cooperation of the Palestinians.

My research suggests that it was actually only a tactical move in an overall strategy. This strategy aimed first at thwarting the creation of a Palestinian Arab state through a secret agreement with Abdallah of Transjordan, whose annexation of the territory allocated for the Palestinian state was to be the first step in his dream of a greater Syria. Second, it sought to increase the territory assigned by the UN to the Jewish state.

Myth Two: The Palestinian Arab totally rejected partition and responded to the call of the mufti of Jerusalem to launch an all-out war on the Jewish state, forcing the Jews to depend on a military solution.

This was not the whole story. While the mufti was indeed fanatical in his opposition to partition, the majority of the Palestinian Arabs, although also opposed, did not respond to his call for a holy war against Israel. On the contrary, prior to Israel's Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948, many Palestinian leaders and groups made efforts to reach a *modus vivendi*. It was only Ben-Gurion's profound opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state that undermined the Palestinian resistance to the mufti's call.

Myth three: The Flight of the Palestinians from the country, both before and after the establishment of the state of Israel, came in response to a call by the Arab leadership to leave temporarily, in order to return with victorious Arab armies. They fled despite the efforts of the Jewish leadership to persuade them to stay.

In fact, the flight was promoted by Israel's political and military leaders, who believed that Zionist colonization and statehood necessitated the "transfer" of Palestinian Arabs to Arab countries.

Myth Four: All of the Arab states, unified in their determination to destroy the newborn Jewish state, joined together on May 15, 1948, to invade Palestine and expel its Jewish inhabitants.

My research indicates that the Arab states aimed not at liquidating the new state, but rather at preventing the implementation of the agreement between the Jewish provisional government and Abdallah for Greater Syria scheme.

Myth Five: The Arab invasion of Palestine on May 15 in contravention of UN Partition Resolution, made the 1948 war inevitable.

The documents show that the war was not inevitable. The Arabs had agreed to a last-minute American proposal for a three-month truce on the condition that Israel temporarily postpone its Declaration of Independence. Israel's provisional government rejected the American proposal by a slim majority of 6 to 4.

Myth Six: The tiny, newborn state of Israel faced the onslaught of the Arab armies as David faced Goliath: a numerically inferior, poorly armed people in danger of being overrun by a military giant.

The facts and figures available point to a different situation altogether. Ben-Gurion himself admits that the war of self-defense lasted only four weeks, until the truce of June 11, when huge quantities of arms reached the country. Israel's better trained and more experienced armed forces then attained superiority in weapons on land, sea and air.

Myth Seven: Israel's hand has always been extended in peace, but since no Arab leader has ever recognized Israel's right to exist, there has never been anyone to talk to.

On the contrary, from the end of World War II to 1952, Israel turned down successive proposals made by Arab states and by neutral mediators that might have brought about an accommodation.

http://www.radioislam.org/historia/zionism/flapan_birth.html